

Jan 1986



FACULTY & STAFF ASSOCIATION
FRASER VALLEY COLLEGE
33844 King Road, R.R. #2,
Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 4N2
Telephone: (604) 853-7441

the ding dong

CONTENTS

FROM THE EDITOR	page	1
FROM THE CONTRACT CHAIR		3
REPORT FROM CAC		4
MANDATORY RETIREMENT		5
SPECIAL SECTION: PROVINCIAL UNION		
Meeting Timetable		6
A Message to Staff		7
The President's View		8
Staff Options		12
BLACKBOARD RAINFOREST - Graham Dowden		16
NEWS AROUND THE COLLEGES		
Northwest Academics Saved?		19
Freedom of Speech at Cariboo		20
LOUSY WORKING CONDITIONS		
Crying, and Grieving, May Help		22
MYTHS ABOUT SOCIAL PROGRAMS		
A LITTLE LABOUR HISTORY		24
		25

FROM THE EDITOR

The formation of a provincial union continues on the agenda for our union. The President's Report recommends acceptance of C-IEA as a provincial union. There is a timetable for FSA meetings on this issue, and some information about alternatives for staff.

The Executive hopes that the issue will be thoroughly aired in the Newsletter. Why express your doubts or support only to a few colleagues when you can talk to all College employees?

In particular, staff may have a lot of questions to raise about joining a provincial union that otherwise consists entirely of instructors. It appears that one of the reasons for C-IEA Presidents' Council rejecting the CUPE option was fear by many college instructors of joining a union with so many clerical and trades members. We must make sure, as our President has consistently attempted to do in C-IEA meetings, that staff interests would not be subordinated in a provincial union of instructors.

* * * * *

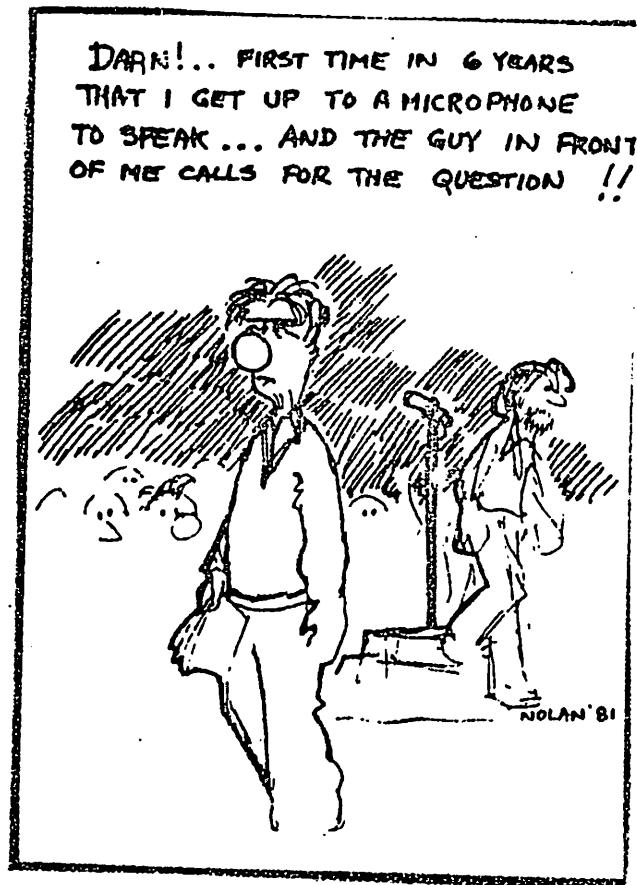
Some people in the Business Office deserve a big 'Thank You' for the Christmas present we received with our December paycheques: a month without dental insurance fees. Maybe they could be seconded to the Ministry of Education to show it how to save money with efficiency and competence instead of with sledgehammer and cleaver.

* * * * *

Everyone is awwitter over the social event of the season: the dinner for ten year veterans on January 22. (It's odd: last year I received a ten year pin, but according to the new calculations, I'm not really a ten year vet.) Lessee, 15 vets plus Board Chair plus Principal times, say, \$25 a dinner equals \$425, a lot more than most of us had in our book budgets this year. (And how many will there be next year?) Anyone care to be remembered for a long time? Designate that the price of your dinner go for books for the LRC or for some other item we have been doing without, complete with donor's card.

* * * * *

The FSA has a new logo - see cover - and due to popular demand, the Newsletter has a new name. We received one clever suggestion for a name - The Busswood Sentinel - since it was felt the initials were appropriate. But the Ding Dong goes with the Abbotsford campus in capturing the spirit of the Valley, and perhaps of the publication. (The new prize for a good suggestion for the Newsletter name is that you won't be known as a Fraser Valley Ding Dong anymore.)



The opinions expressed in this NEWSLETTER do not, unless explicitly stated otherwise, express the official position of the FSA.

FROM THE CONTRACT CHAIR...

Contract negotiations begin on January 23! The staff representative on the team is Bertha Solvey - and an exceedingly competent spokesperson she is, too. The first meeting will involve settling procedural matters, introducing negotiators and identifying the 'scope of bargaining.' I have asked Kevin to make his usual witty, provocative opening speech on the union's behalf. What I fondly hope is that no one from the other side will consider it necessary to pound his shoe on the table and yell, 'We will bury you' for several hours before we can actually begin bargaining. We can also hope - though naively, I suppose - that any outrageous offers will be omitted this time around. Offers such as, "Hey, you lazy nits! How about teaching ten courses and taking a five percent cut in pay and donating your vacation time to work for Expo?" appeal neither to my sense of aesthetics nor my sense of humour. They have, however, sometimes proved irresistible for the other side. I will follow George's excellent precedent of circulating my own informal minutes for members after each meeting. But, of course, public pronouncements about negotiations will be prohibited during the process.

The contract committee is still working on the specific wording for various clauses in the FSA's proposals - these largely as a result of your submissions. We will make these available in the library for your perusal just as soon as possible.

The Salary & Working Conditions Committee meets in Richmond this weekend. The main subject for Saturday's discussion will be faculty evaluations, especially as they are being misused in some colleges. Some grievances are currently pending. We are also asked whether job-sharing is an issue for our contract. It isn't - at least, none of you requested such a clause - but you might be considering it for next time.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your many written and verbal suggestions. Perhaps my favourite comment was that we should add two steps to the faculty salary scale "to bring our salaries more in line with our parents' hopes for our futures."

Virginia Cooke

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT FROM C.A.C.

Since I was unable to attend the meeting of December 11, Scott Fast went along in my place, and passed on some notes of the proceedings to me. Thanks Scott. Here's a brief summary of those notes:

George McGuire met with the Education and Policy Committee of the Board to discuss CAC quorum problems, and we will be operating under a 50% of elected members plus one rule in the future. The new quorum passed first and second reading at the last EPC meeting.

The 1986-87 Program Profile looks a bit better than last year. It reflected a continuation of multi-campus thinking, a failure to fund U.T. at the level we want (or even taught last year), and a net increase in college revenue of about \$45,000. There is still no news on several areas, including CE funding and inflationary increases.

As a result of the competitive bidding system for the college food service contract, a new company - DOMCO - has replaced Phil Marchant in this area of college services. (I gather there were some rumblings about this change, rumblings to which Erling Close replied in a memo sent to faculty and staff a week or so ago. I guess only time and your level of indigestion will determine whether the change was a sound one or not. I have never used the food services to any extent so don't feel I can add much to the discussion, but it strikes me that a 3 minute wait for tea water to be boiled in a microwave may be one problem worth addressing. Send your complaints to Erling, not to DOMCO.)

CAC revisions to Policy 350.01 (Letter Grades), adding minus grades to the system, will be resubmitted after a minor error which mistakenly included a D grade is corrected.

There was considerable discussion on other matters before the CAC (including incomplete grades used in cases of academic misconduct, and possible changes in Policy 340.04 (Open Door)), but I'll report on these when some final decisions are made by the CAC.

Doug Nicol

MANDATORY RETIREMENT GRIEVED

In the last several months, several veteran College employees have retired - voluntarily.

However, the College Board also adopted a mandatory retirement policy of the usual sort. And an employee who did not want to retire in accordance with the policy was given no choice.

So, a grievance was launched. As you may know, several such cases have been heard by the courts in other jurisdictions and have tended to find that mandatory retirement provisions violate the Charter of Rights. While not wanting to bear the expense of being the first court case in this jurisdiction, the FSA Executive felt committed to doing so if necessary.

However, it appears that we will not have to bear that expense.

The College Board has agreed to extend the grievor's period of employment for one year pending the results of the first arbitration or court case on this issue in B.C. The Board has agreed that should mandatory retirement be allowed, then an employee in a position similar to that of the grievor would have to retire at the end of the school term in which the ruling was made. (The grievor will have to retire no earlier than the end of the one year extension.)

If it is ruled that mandatory retirement is not allowed, the employee will be retained upon his or her request until retiring voluntarily or until evidence indicates the person is no longer capable of performing satisfactorily.

PROVINCIAL UNION TIMETABLE

The FSA Executive has established the following timetable to convey information and promote discussion on the issue of our joining a Provincial Union. Since negotiations will also occur during these months, negotiation issues may also be dealt with at these meetings.

January: The full C-IEA report on the provincial union options will be distributed along with a summary of major points and options.

In late January, a staff meeting will be held (as requested by staff) to discuss participation in the FSA and whether there is interest in pursuing other union options.

February: A faculty meeting will be held to discuss provincial union options.

March: There will be campus meetings of faculty and staff for updates on the provincial union issue and on negotiations.

April: There will be a General Meeting on provincial union options with representatives invited from C-IEA and possibly CUPE and others.

May: The Annual General Meeting will deal with regular AGM business and vote on provincial union options. Separate votes will be taken for faculty and for staff components since each has its own certification as a union local.

A MESSAGE TO STAFF MEMBERS...

No one needs to be told about the political problems education is experiencing in B.C. The time is upon us and we must now look long and hard and passionately at all ways of dealing with this situation.

Our Faculty & Staff Association is at a point where it must explore all avenues of survival for what could become an even colder financial climate for education in B.C. The FSA must act with interest and responsibility for the welfare of ALL its members.

Many Associations throughout B.C., including our own, are now talking about alternatives to individual Unions. Discussions and important decisions must be made soon. Do we remain the way we are at FVC or should we look into forming into a larger provincial unit? The FSA has figured prominently in these discussions not only through active participation but also because of our unique model of faculty and staff co-operation. Were faculty to form a provincial union, C-IEA has stated clearly that we, the staff, would be welcome. What does this mean for us?

Are we getting a fair shake in Union direction? Are we getting answers to our questions? Are we asking the right questions?

As you must now be aware, there is going to be a staff only FSA meeting on January 29 at 4.30pm in Abbotsford to discuss these and other FSA related issues. Questions as to the form and direction for our Association are quite appropriate at this time as is the other question as to the form and direction for staff.

Bring your questions to this meeting. If you feel the FSA isn't doing enough for you, speak out. If you feel intimidated by others, speak out. If you need more explanation as to new directions - or if you have ideas - speak out. Right now, for any Union, there exists a very real need to not only ask these questions but to also answer them. Be prepared to do both.

Richard Heyman

SHOULD WE JOIN A PROVINCIAL UNION?: A PERSONAL VIEW

During the next few months we are invited to consider joining with other college unions in the formation of a provincial union. Such a step has special implications for the FSA, given our structure as a joint faculty and staff union, and should be given careful thought before any commitment is made.

A great deal of information will be made available; however, I am writing this column to give a personal view of this matter, a view based on my almost 10 years of association with the college system and its labour relations.

When the colleges were created in the early 1970's they were a response to a variety of community based movements seeking better educational opportunities for a province in which post-secondary educational services were concentrated in the south-west corner of the province. It was felt that the community colleges would be appropriate vehicles for delivering education which would accommodate community and regional needs. While there were many similarities between colleges, each was linked to its own regional base, and, through local boards, reflected many unique characteristics of their client communities.

Labour relations in the college system were also diverse during the early period. At varying times, and with varying concerns, faculty and staff groups formed associations, then unions. Despite the differences between groups, enough of a community of interest was perceived such that the CFF (College Faculties Federation) was created to allow unions to discuss and comment on issues of common interest.

Even during these early and relatively prosperous days there were arguments made that a provincial union of faculty would allow stronger representations to be made vis a vis working conditions and salaries. The union argument was seen, especially by the larger lower mainland colleges, as too radical, and detrimental to a proper professional attitude among faculty. Despite the "containment" of the one big union movement, it was becoming apparent that centralization within the college system demanded greater unity among faculty, and so CFF was laid to rest and CIEA was born--not as a provincial union, but as a federation of independent unions with considerable articulation and coordination of mutual concerns.

While faculty were figuring out to what extent they were (or weren't) trade unionists, most staff groups in the province were affiliating with BCGEU, CUPE, or AUCE. Only at Fraser Valley College was something different attempted.

The tendency towards centralization, begun in the 1970's, has not abated. The Sacred provincial government has abandoned the original community based college in favour of a series of branch plant operations which deliver educational services designed and funded by a central authority. While this centralized model is not completely in place, it is implicit in government actions and legislation which have gutted boards of community representation, taken away board autonomy, and imposed formula funding.

Centralization, involving as it does a pre-occupation with costs, has had considerable impact on working conditions. Everyone is being squeezed. Classes get bigger, support staff have more and more tasks to perform, library and equipment budgets plummet, and so on.

Given the events of the past few years, I believe that the time has come to take some steps which acknowledge the pressures that we are under. The consequences of centralization strike at all aspects of college life from working conditions through professional concerns. It is important, if we remain committed to some version of the original community college vision, to keep resisting, struggling to inject some degree of vision and humanity into the machinations of the provincial government as it tramples around in the educational fields. Forming a provincial union is a small but necessary step in a resistance movement.

The major question confronting us at FVC is whether we can take this step without trading away or weakening the particular strengths and benefits that are characteristic of FVC's labour relations. Let us be very clear--our college, despite the provincial attack, has not suffered the daily attacks and humiliations that have occurred at other colleges. The provincial offensive has been filtered through the unique character of our union and management structure, and most of our members are sensitive to the need to maintain the benefits that obtain within our college community. Let us also be clear, however, that our relatively good labour relations have not made us immune to attack. We have suffered considerably in all areas. Our wages and morale have dropped in the face of increasing workloads and declining services.

(personalities)

The major benefits that follow from the creation of a provincial union are three fold: First, we enhance our collective ability to consider and articulate professional and other concerns which are common to all college communities. Second, through a more elaborate staffing of a central office, we increase our ability to deal with a wide variety of grievance and negotiating issues. The costs of such servicing are lowered by avoiding duplication, and the

quality of servicing is increased by pooling experience. Third, we greatly increase our ability to defend ourselves through the existence of a central defence fund which, in addition to providing funds to allay strike and lockout costs, sends a message to the provincial government about our "bottom line".

I believe that these benefits and others can be achieved without loss of those things which set Fraser Valley College somewhat apart from other colleges. I base this conclusion on the fact that we would retain significant autonomy in dealing with our own negotiations and internal labour relations. We would continue to hold our own certification, and we would maintain virtually the same internal structure, with responsibility for the conduct of our own affairs. Help is available if necessary, but under normal conditions we would continue as before, free to forge or maintain whatever labour relations we consider appropriate.

It is a fair question to ask why we should bother to join a provincial union if we intend to conduct our business as before? I must repeat that while we have, in relative terms, hung on to a significant degree of collegiality, we have been battered by restraint. We need, as our provincial colleagues need, increased solidarity, and the ability to aggressively promote the interests of college employees. If the provincial government is going to relate to college employees as a "mass", then it is important that we develop the ability to make a collective response when necessary. The provincial government continues to press for workloads and conditions which are much greater than we believe to be appropriate in a high quality educational system. Our ability to defend ourselves is arguably enhanced when we increase our ability to collectively respond to issues of common concern.

A final point concerns the question of whether staff interests are protected by a move towards provincial union status. As I have already noted, most staff groups at other colleges are affiliated with CUPE or BCGEU, thus making the FSA the only CIEA member with a staff component. To the extent that staff and faculty have benefited from a joint union through the past decade, we will continue to benefit. The need to improve services will remain our own local problem. Membership in CIEA will not, I believe, cause any deterioration in the servicing of staff interests. In fact, given the experience of CIEA staff, FSA staff members will receive excellent support in matters relating to the administration of the collective agreement. Whether or not other staff groups might come in to CIEA in the long run is not known at this point.

I have not given any consideration to the fact that CIEA's President's Council has recommended against joining CUPE or

BCGEU. At the risk of oversimplifying an important issue, I believe that most presidents feel that these unions are too large and too removed from college realities to provide what we need. The responsibility for protecting our interests remains with us and should not be transferred. A provincial union, built around CIEA, will be tailored to our needs and concerns, and can grow and develop in accordance with our perception of our circumstances.

The forgoing article is, I reiterate, a personal statement. There will be adequate opportunity to discuss any matters to which I may have given short shrift. The question of staff interests in particular will require more discussion. Please give careful consideration to the information that will be coming out, and avail yourself of the opportunities to attend the meetings that will occur during the next few months.

I am convinced that while a provincial union is a necessary and evolutionary step, it will not degrade our local autonomy, and the unity of faculty and staff that we have created over the years.

KEVIN BUSSWOOD
PRESIDENT

UNION OPTIONS FOR STAFF

In the past year, CIEA investigated four possible directions: maintaining the status quo, joining the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) or the B.C. Government Employees Union (BCGEU), or turning CIEA into a provincial union. As an association of unions composed primarily of instructional employees, naturally its investigation was carried out from that perspective. CIEA is now recommending the last alternative.

As the FSA considers this recommendation, staff employees should also consider the above alternatives and the possibility that their interests would be best served by affiliation with some union not mentioned above.

The January staff meetings will consider these possibilities. The FSA Executive hopes the following information is helpful.

This information was gathered from the various CIEA documents about affiliation with CUPE or BCGEU. Consequently, it may not be entirely accurate for a small, primarily clerical unit considering such affiliation.

Affiliation Options

Both BCGEU and CUPE offer several options for associating with them:

Service Contract: A union can obtain a service contract to receive, for example, help with bargaining, arbitration, research.

Affiliation: By affiliating, a union may obtain membership in the B.C. Federation of Labour (B.C. Fed), Canadian Labour Congress (CLC); this option may include a service contract.

Membership: The members of the local union become members of the larger union.

I suspect that if staff were to consider association with a larger union, they would be interested primarily in membership.

BCGEU and CUPE

C-IEA soon decided that CUPE was the better option because it provides a lot of autonomy for locals, and that is consistent with faculty unions' history of autonomous locals. As a result, not as much information was gathered about BCGEU. However, here it is for comparison with CUPE.

If staff do not value local autonomy to the same degree as have many faculty, then they should investigate BCGEU further.

Services Provided

Both unions provide legal assistance, research, education, policy research, public relations help, and access to membership in the B.C. Fed and CLC. Both unions help locals to form alliances with other unions and to coordinate bargaining strategies. CUPE is reputed to have better relations within local labour councils.

CUPE is reputed to do excellent policy and economic research. It was a leader in the B.C. movement to defend education against government attacks. BCGEU is reputed to be excellent at research on technical matters such as contract language.

While both unions maintain regional offices throughout the province, CUPE recognizes autonomy of union locals - perhaps to a fault - while BCGEU is centralized - again, perhaps to a fault.

Nationally, CUPE has about 300,000 members in about 1,900 locals. There are about 25,000 members in B.C. in 162 locals.

With CUPE, a Fraser Valley College staff unit would continue as a local union with its own certification, constitution (so long as it does not conflict with National or B.C. constitutions, which is unlikely) and collective agreement. It would select its own shop stewards and bargaining team, make its own negotiating proposals, conduct its own negotiations, and make its own decisions on ratification and strikes.

Upon request by a local, CUPE regional staff will handle arbitrations, assist with bargaining preparation or conduct negotiations, and represent grievances beyond the first step. CUPE regional staff handle much of the work the FSA now sends to a lawyer, and would use a lawyer in some cases. Locals pay for their own lawyer if they want one.

With BCGEU, Fraser Valley College staff would probably not be a separate local. So while strike decisions are made by the bargaining unit, staff would probably vote as part of a larger unit including more than College staff.

The delegate structure for each union's conventions are about the same: one local delegate for up to 100 members, plus an additional delegate for those with more than 100 members, plus additional delegates for larger locals.

Strike and Defense Funds

Both unions have good strike/defense funds:

CUPE has a national fund of \$19 million. After the first 10 days of a strike or lockout, it pays \$75/member/week plus an additional \$20/member/week if the local is a member of the B.C. Division.

BCGEU pays \$75/member/week plus \$20/dependent. The Provincial Executive may authorize up to \$300/week in special cases where significant provincial issues are at stake.

Costs of CUPE:

For a local with an average income of less than \$27,000/year:

\$11.25/member/month to National Office including fees to CLC and B.C. Fed
(\$6.65/m/m for part-time members);

Optional fees:

\$1.65/member/month to B.C. Division including defense fund + one time only initiation fee of \$2.50/member,
\$0.15-0.40/m/m to Regional CUPE councils.
about \$0.20/m/m to Local Labour Councils;

Locals collect their own funds from their members and pay the above dues from them.

For a local with an average income of more than \$27,000/year:

.5% of gross salary + above options .

Costs of BCGEU:

1.5% of gross salary of members.
includes fees for B.C. Fed and CLC affiliation but not for Local Labour Councils.

Locals receive rebate of \$2.25/member/month up to \$12,000 (and with a minimum of \$4,000) to run local office and pay arbitration costs. All other services provided by BCGEU staff.

- Paul Herman

BLACKBOARD RAINFOREST, 1986

by
Graham Dowden

[List]

BLACKBOARD JUNGLE, 1940-1982

From the Presidential Biblical Scoreboard, a magazine published during the campaign by the Biblical News Service. The magazine was intended to help readers "vote conscientiously for godly rule" by publicizing candidates' stands on "the crucial biblical-family-moral issues." The following list shows the top seven discipline problems in public schools in 1940 and the top seventeen in 1982.

1940	1982
1. Talking	1. Rape
2. Chewing gum	2. Robbery
3. Making noise	3. Assault
4. Running in the halls	4. Burglary
5. Getting out of turn in line	5. Arson
6. Wearing improper clothing	6. Bombings
7. Not putting paper in wastebaskets	7. Murder
	8. Suicide
	9. Absenteeism
	10. Vandalism
	11. Extortion
	12. Drug abuse
	13. Alcohol abuse
	14. Gang warfare
	15. Pregnancy
	16. Abortion
	17. Venereal disease

-- from Harper's,
March 1985

Ah, for the good old days. Of 1982, that is. Well, not really. But at least it's interesting to contemplate coping with rape, robbery, and assault in the halls of learning. It's all so American, so mythical ...

At Fraser Valley College in 1986, 1940 seems to have reappeared in all its paralyzing boringness. For the first time in my sixteen years of teaching, high school discipline problems seem to have percolated upward into my college classroom.

Picture the lecturer, lecturing. I am making good jokes. I am making good points. I am waving my arms around in the time-honoured manner. I am open, friendly, involved. I am making eye contact. My voice is strong, warm, confident. My voice is rising ... rising ...

Blackboard Rainforest, 1986 (Contd.)

But wait a minute. My voice is rising ... rising ...! Why is my voice rising ... rising ...? And where are the eyes, to make contact with mine? What are these heads, these student heads, huddled together in twos and threes? And what are these voices? What is this hubbub of student voices, talking? What are they talking about? As I talk on, I listen. They are talking about ... they are talking about ... the hairstyle ... the jacket ... the party ... the game!

I am cursed with sensitive ears. Whenever I become more aware of what my listeners are saying than of what I am saying myself, my concentration goes. I falter. I stop. I pause. I begin to fix what I hope will look like a beady eye on the groups in conversation. One by one, they become aware of some alteration, some shift in background ambience. The muzak has ended, someone has switched the program off. One by one, they fall silent. Some look down, abashed. These can be saved. But some. Some look straight back, and you can see it in their eyes: what nerve, to interrupt us in the middle of interrupting him!

So far, though unprecedented, this is a small problem. The only class of mine in which it became serious last semester consisted of 24 eighteen-year-olds (plus or minus a year) without the moderating influence of even one 'mature' student to give them the hint that authority and responsibility might reside just as properly in the student's bosom as in the instructor's.

But if it is a small problem, it is not isolated. It has popped up this year in many classrooms, in play rehearsals, and in a generally cavalier attitude to attendance, assignment deadlines, and exams. In one particularly galling episode, a basketball tournament was scheduled during the first day of last semester's final exams, as if it could be taken for granted that academic priorities could readily bend to accommodate athletic ones.

Until this year, and reaching far back into the past, the summer months between Grade 12 and first year college always managed somehow to effect enough of a transformation that the question of 'discipline', always ultimately external in the high school, and vested in the office of the vice-principal, became sufficiently internal in the first weeks of college that disruptive behaviour problems did not arise. One's presence at the institution had become a matter of an adult's choice rather than a child's obligation, and the discipline one had chosen to study was discipline enough, to be mastered with self-discipline or not at all.

There have always been unmotivated and childish college students, and one can always hope that this year's outbreak of rudeness and condescension is, as Michael Walker calls the recent

Blackboard Rainforest, 1986. (Contd.)

rise in interest rates, a blip rather than a trend. But I am worried. I think the provincial government's consistent under-valuing - in fact, denigration - of education is finally beginning to show ugly results. By the third year of a ruthless and hypocritical program of damaging education programming and mocking education's goals, even the toughest and most idealistic administrators, teachers, staff, and students are becoming profoundly demoralized. How could a high school teacher with 200 students possibly find the time or energy to care what happens to each of them individually? And if a high school student learns that no one cares that much about what happens to him individually, how is he ever to turn into a college student who cares what happens to himself?

Here, finally, if you want to read this part, is the FSA editorial. Each year's negotiations always seem to concern themselves with quantitative items - so many fractions of one percent of a pay raise, so many additional bodies per class, and so on. But as many people have been trying to point out for a long time, there comes a point where quantitative erosion of educational opportunity (a few grains of sand slip here, a clump of turf there, no big deal at the time) suddenly results in a qualitative collapse of such surprisingness that it takes a while for people to realize that everything is now at a new, and lower, level.

I have never fancied myself a prophet, and I sincerely hope I am being melodramatic. But I see signs. I think we have already given away as much as (if not more than) we, or the quality of education at this college, can afford to. If ever there was a year for us to hang together and hang tough, this is it. People who are guilty about unions are always guilty about self-interest. But there is much more at stake this year than the welfare of our own narrow selves.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM AT NORTHWEST

In the December Newsletter, it was reported that the Northwest Community College Board had dropped from its statement of philosophy a clause about the desirability of student-teacher contact for quality education. This action prompted fears that instructors were to be replaced by correspondence courses.

According to a report in the Vancouver Sun, January 13, the Board unanimously accepted a proposal that existing academic instructors and courses remain, and that a teleconferencing system be implemented to make courses available to more students. The teleconferencing system is radio broadcasts of live lectures that enable listening students to ask questions of the instructor during the broadcast.

As a result, the academic program will not lose \$100,000 from its \$550,000 budget, as previously announced in a preliminary budget. Principal Val George said the system will increase enrollment, eliminating the need for the cut.

Academic Workers' Union President George Stanley said, "It's very democratic, student-centred technology. But I do have some reservations about it. Traditionally, it has been used in remote areas, and it's kind of unusual to use teleconferencing in towns such as Kitimat and Prince Rupert."

====

DUES LEVELS OF FACULTY UNIONS

Academic Workers' Union (Northwest)	2%
B.C.I.T. Staff Society	1.3%
Camosun College Faculty Association	.75%
Capilano College Faculty Association	1.67%
Cariboo College Faculty Association	1%
C.N.C. Faculty Association	2.5%
Douglas & Kwantlen Faculty Association	1.5%
E.K.C.C. Faculty Association	1.5%
Fraser Valley Faculty & Staff Association	1%
Malaspina College Faculty Association	1.2%
Okanagan College Faculty Association	2%
Selkirk College Faculty Association	1%

CARIBOO FIRES TEACHER FOR LETTERS TO EDITOR

For those of you who occasionally speak your mind (and think that even teachers have a right to), take heed from the following story compiled from Vancouver Sun stories.

December 17

Cariboo College psychology instructor Barry MacKinnon was fired for letters to the Kamloops News describing the college as "a shoddy product (that is) getting worse each year. . . .Cariboo College has always been a second-rate institution. . . .It was designed that way; and it provides a second-class education to the post-secondary ghetto of Canada - Interior B.C." The letter describes the College Board Chair as a "government apologist," and named names and specific programmes.

Cariboo wrote MacKinnon a letter of reprimand. He then wrote College Principal Charles Brewster a letter expanding on his disagreement with college practices. After writing another letter to the News, he was suspended for three days without pay. The grievance of the suspension went to non-binding arbitration which ruled in favour of the College on November 30.

After an interview in the News in which he called the arbitrator's ruling unacceptable and after circulating a memo to his colleagues requesting support, ten year employee MacKinnon was fired on December 11 in the middle of exams. At 3:30 p.m., he was told to clear out his personal possessions and be off campus by noon the next day

More than 20 of MacKinnon's 30 psychology 212 students filed their Final Exams with a lawyer rather than the College in order to protest the firing. About 100 students, faculty, and citizens attended a campus protest rally on December 16.

December 18

A BCGEU staff representative said that the College administration took pictures of students at the December 16

rally. And the administration has called former students who have dropped out of MacKinnon's courses in an attempt to gather detrimental information. Students who filed their Final Exams with a lawyer were told they would bear full responsibility for their actions.

College Principal Charles Brewster refused to discuss the matter, offering to confirm information only if he were not quoted, saying "we really have to not stir things up and can't debate this in public."

Kamloops and District Labour Council will set up a coalition and raise money in MacKinnon's defense.

December 24

MacKinnon is still waiting for the College Board's decision on the grievance over his dismissal.

MacKinnon said, "I appeared before the board of Cariboo College and presented a grievance against my dismissal and a proposal as to how we could hopefully resolve this whole thing." He said that while he has some regrets over "particularly harsh criticisms," especially those made against individuals, "in another sense I don't regret it at all. It has raised a very serious issue and that is the whole question of academic freedom and freedom of expression and that's a hell of a lot more important than anything I've ever had to say."

January 7

Twenty-three students who filed their Final Exams with a lawyer in order to protest MacKinnon's firing will fail those exams, according to Principal Charles Brewster.

The Faculty Association Executive was meeting today about taking the firing to binding arbitration.

KEEP STRESS AWAY -
COMPLAIN TO YOUR BOSS TODAY

OAKLAND, CALIF. (AP) - Employees who stop blaming themselves for job stress and start blaming working conditions and their bosses are more productive and have a lower rate of absenteeism, a study has found.

"What we discovered is that expressing anger, when it is focused at work-related problems, actually produces emotional health," said Dr. Michael Lerner, the report's primary author.

The three-year study, conducted by the Institute for Labour and Mental Health, involved 450 area workers including telephone operators, postal workers, secretaries, auto-workers, and security guards.

The \$600,000 study was funded by the U.S. National Institute for Mental Health.

Workers who blame stress on poor workplace conditions also drink less and have fewer ulcers and lower blood pressure, the study said.

The study suggests workers should vent their frustration and job-related anger in groups that meet to discuss job problems and how to solve them.

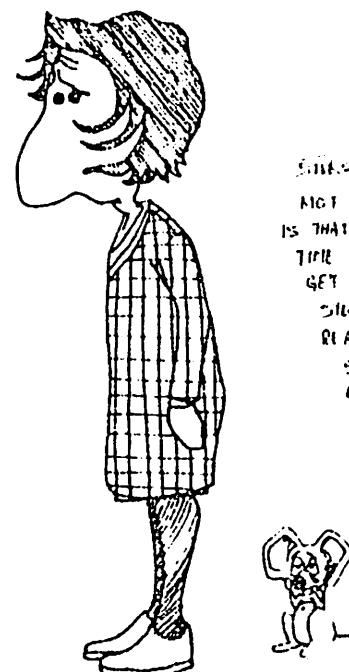
COMPENSATION FOR "TEACHER BURNOUT"

Introduction

In a recent arbitration award in Nova Scotia, the arbitrator dismissed a grievance filed on behalf of a teacher seeking compensation for "teacher burnout". However, while the grievance was dismissed on the facts, the award is a first in recognizing that "teacher burnout" can constitute an "injury sustained in the performance of ... duties."

Teacher Burnout May be an Injury, says Arbitrator

The arbitrator found that the grievor sustained an injury on September 6, 1983 which was that of anxiety depression to which she had a predisposition. However, he also found that she



Compensation for "Teacher Burnout" (Contd.)

suffered from significant stress in her personal life. The arbitrator held that, where personal stressors are evident, the grievor must show that her anxiety depression was caused by job-related stressors, even though intensified by a predisposition. Job-related stressors need not be the sole cause but it must be shown that they are more likely to be the cause of anxiety depression than personal stressors:

"If the burden lies on the Grievor to show that her anxiety depression was 'sustained in the performance of' her duties then she must show that it was caused by job related stressors even if intensified by predisposition rather than personal stressors. Since, all of us are subject to some personal stress, it would be impossible, and therefore an unreasonable interpretation of the burden placed upon the Grievor to insist that she show that job related stressors were the sole cause. It is not impossible and therefore a reasonable interpretation of the burden placed upon her to insist that she show it was more likely to be the cause of her anxiety depression than personal stressors even if 'aided' by predisposition.

In my opinion and I so find, this is the nature of the Grievor's proof: to show, on the balance of probabilities, that her anxiety depression on or about September 6, 1983 was caused by job-related stressors - teacher stress and burnout. Her predisposition to stress may be factored in to tilt the balance in her favour but it does not reduce or alter her burden."

The evidence suggested to the arbitrator that the grievor would have suffered anxiety depression in 1983 even without job stressors. He said that he was not satisfied on the evidence that it was more probable than not that the injury suffered by the grievor was caused by job-related stressors and accordingly he dismissed the grievance.

Conclusion

Although the grievance was dismissed on the facts, it is significant that the arbitrator held that leave for an "injury on duty" is available not only for physical injuries, but also for psychic injuries, including the cumulative effects of prolonged exposure to work stress. The award is, in fact, the first to accept that "teacher burnout" can constitute a job-related injury.

[Editor's Note: Excerpted from Lancaster Labour Law Service]

GREAT CANADIAN MYTHS

Canada's Social Programs are too Generous, and Cost Too Much

Spending on education, health care, pensions, unemployment insurance and other social programs has indeed risen substantially in Canada since the 1950s - but less than it has in most other countries.

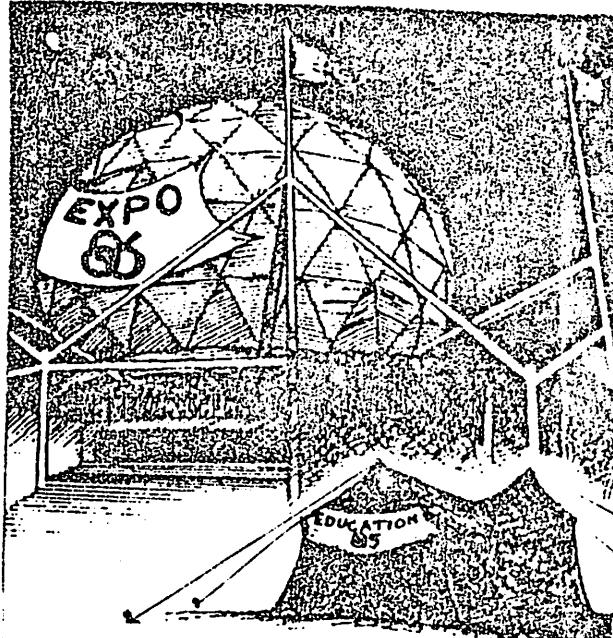
Social spending now makes up about 22% of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but in West Germany it's 31%, in Italy 29%, in Britain 24%, in France 23%.

Far from being a big spender on social programs, Canada ranks 15th on a list of 19 industrialized countries, according to a study conducted by Prof. Harold Wilensky of the University of California. Our public pensions, our workers' compensation, our UI payments, and most of our other social programs are not nearly as generous as those in most other countries.

Right-wingers often claim our allegedly too rich social benefits make people lazy and less productive. But West German workers, who are among the most productive in the world, also receive the most in social welfare. So the two are not at all incompatible. It could more reasonably be argued that workers who don't have to worry about the costs of getting old or sick, or of educating their children, would tend to be more efficient in their jobs.

The fact is that Canada has been far more stingy in its approach to social spending since 1975 than have most other nations. The problem is not how to control the costs of Canada's social programs, but how to prevent their continuing erosion.

[Editor's note: Excerpted from Ten Public Sector Myths, a pamphlet from the Canadian Union of Public Employees.]



B.C. LABOUR HISTORY

1880-1889

In 1881 only 50,000 people lived and worked in British Columbia and Native Indians were a substantial portion of this population. The building of the CPR during the 1880's created a heavy demand for labour, which was met by increased immigration, and introduced a new industrial economy to the province and to Vancouver.

As the economy developed, new kinds of unions emerged. The mid-80's were the peak years of the Knights of Labour, which also functioned as a political movement and as a benevolent society, and sought to enrol both skilled and unskilled workers. Their first local in Vancouver pre-dated the city's incorporation in April, 1886.

Rivals to the Knights were the craft unions, organized to serve only skilled workers and with narrower objectives. The first craft union in Vancouver was the International Typographical Union which received its charter in 1887. As the Knights faded from the scene, the craft unions grew in strength. At the turn of the decade the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council was formed, with representation from the Typographers, Carpenters, Plasterers, Painters, Stevedores, Lathers and the Shaftesbury Assembly of Knights.

January 1, 1917: First Workers Compensation Act comes into effect.

January 2, 1919: Printers walk out for higher wages.

January 3, 1959: Marine engineers strike for higher wages; won in negotiations.

January 5, 1946: Unemployed veterans pitch tents outside Hotel Vancouver, demand housing.

January 24, 1944: Boeing workers strike over dismissal of union members.

January 26, 1946: Veterans occupy Hotel Vancouver in demand for housing.

January 27, 1968: Pickle workers strike and win respect for collective agreement.

January 28, 1912: Police storm relief meeting: arrests, injuries, at Powell st. grounds.

- from the Centennial Labour History Calendar